

House Joint Resolution 79, to Disapprove Most-Favored-Nation Treatment to the Products of the People's Republic of China, which will be subject to a rule; and the House will then continue consideration of H.R. 1119, the National Defense Authorization Act. We hope to finish DOD on Tuesday evening.

On Wednesday, June 25, and Thursday, June 26, the House will meet at 10 a.m. to consider the fiscal year 1998 budget reconciliation. We expect to take up the spending component of reconciliation on Wednesday and the tax cut component on Thursday. We should finish the week's business by 6 p.m. on Thursday and have Members on their way back to their districts for the July Fourth district work period.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, if I could ask the distinguished majority leader, we have just been informed by the colloquy between the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] and the gentleman from California [Mr. DELLUMS] about the concern that a number have, I am sure on both sides of the aisle, about extremely important amendments being voted on on the defense authorization bill late Monday night.

Is it possible that since we have some time on Tuesday dedicated for the defense bill, we could take the 3 items that the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] mentioned: Bosnia, the depot issue, and the B-2, and designate them on Tuesday, so that the majority of the Members who might not make it on Monday, certainly maybe the overwhelming share of them, would be here for those three very important debates.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, again, if the gentleman would yield, obviously the management of the bill within the time slots granted to it is at the direction, and should be, of the committee floor managers. This office is always ready to stand willing to work with the floor managers of a bill to assist in any way to help them achieve the flexibility that will give them the greatest opportunity to manage their bill in the most effective and responsive way possible, and we will do that in this case on this subject as well.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. Since the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] believes that the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. SPENCE] may be able to accommodate the concerns expressed about so many important votes so late Monday night, I would hope that the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] would intercede with the chairman and we could assure the Members, who may not have been prepared to come back on Monday, that they will have an opportunity on the key issues and final passage perhaps on Tuesday.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, I will encourage the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. SPENCE] in every way possible and assist him in any way that I may.

If I might just add, I certainly would like to do everything I can on behalf of

my good friend, the gentleman from California [Mr. DELLUMS], to have the body fully informed about his amendments that it might make the most judicious vote possible, and I am sure he appreciates my interest in the matter.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California [Mr. DELLUMS] says he understands, Mr. Leader, and I appreciate the fact that you did not further reference the depot issue.

I would like to inquire a bit about reconciliation and the tax bill. It has been my understanding and I think the understanding of many Members that we were going to have separate votes on the reconciliation package and the tax package.

Just to clarify, is there a continuation of that commitment, or is there some move afoot to perhaps combine two separate bills into one and have one vote on the package?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would continue to yield, our current plan is to take the two components, reduction in spending and reduction in taxes of reconciliation as two separate bills. The House has retained the option to treat that as a single reconciliation bill and we do that, although I must say I have no indication now that there would be a movement in that direction.

I do think it is only fair, though, to recognize that while we currently plan to have them in two bills, that that option still remains and should there be a decision to make a change, obviously we would notify the minority as quickly as possible.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, so it is fair to say at the moment there is no intention of doing so, but the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] retains, he believes, the option of doing so?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is absolutely correct.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I know the gentleman understands that Members on this side of the aisle feel very strongly about the commitment that they believe has been made that we deal with them on a separate level, and I think that is a broadly-believed feeling on this side from one end of the political spectrum on the other.

The gentleman has indicated that we are going to be having very late nights next week. What nights would we be expected to be here and how late would we be?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I believe Monday night would probably, as I anticipate, be the only night where we would expect to stay late. Of course partially because in order to accommodate the people's travel requirements, we really effectively begin the day late, but the other evenings of next week I do not believe our work requirements would require us to go late, and I do not anticipate that there would be anything that would cause that to happen.

So I would think that generally 6, 7 p.m. on the other evenings would be approximately, until Thursday, of course, where it is our hard and fast hope to complete our work by 6 p.m. in order to accommodate the travel arrangements that Members like to make.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader. I believe Members appreciate the firm commitment for departure time, and I appreciate the degree to which the gentleman has been sticking to that. On behalf of the minority we appreciate very much that commitment consistently being made and kept.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO], who helped all of us Richards get it right, and I encourage people to understand the importance of the name Richard in the lives of little children.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have had this colloquy.

ADJOURNMENT FROM SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 1997, TO MONDAY, JUNE 23, 1997

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Saturday, June 21, 1997, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, June 23, 1997, for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

MOST FAVORED NATION STATUS FOR CHINA

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to share with my colleagues an extraordinary letter that I received last night. Over the past several weeks there has been a perception that virtually all Christian leaders in this country support revocation of Most Favored Nation trading status for the People's Republic of China.

Just yesterday we heard here in the Capitol from many Christian missionaries who have been on the ground in

China working to spread the gospel, and then last night I received what I believe to be an unprecedented letter from the Reverend Billy Graham, and I am going to ask unanimous consent to have it included in the RECORD and I will have copies of it here for my colleagues on the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, in this letter he says, "I am in favor of doing all we can to strengthen our relationship with China and its people. China is rapidly becoming one of the dominant economic and political powers in the world and I believe it is far better for us to keep China as a friend than to treat it as an adversary."

This is a very potent message. While the Reverend Graham does not want to get involved in the MFN debate, he makes his position very, very clear about the need to maintain engagement. I urge my colleagues to oppose the resolution of disapproval when it comes up next week.

Montreat, NC, June 19, 1997.

Hon. DAVID DREIER,
Congress of the United States, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN DREIER, Thank you for the telephone calls concerning the People's Republic of China that you have made recently to both me and my son, Ned, who heads a ministry which works closely with the churches of China. Ned and I have discussed the issue and felt that it was important enough for me to write directly to you. Like you, I have great respect for China's long and rich heritage, and I am grateful for the opportunities I have had to visit that great country. It has been a privilege to get to know many of its leaders and also to become familiar with the actual situation of religious believers in the P.R.C.

The current debate about renewing China's "Most Favored Nation" trading status no doubt raises many complex and difficult questions, and it is not my intention to become involved in the political aspects of this issue. However, I am in favor of doing all we can to strengthen our relationship with China and its people. China is rapidly becoming one of the dominant economic and political powers in the world, and I believe it is far better for us to keep China as a friend than to treat it as an adversary. Furthermore, in my experience, nations respond to friendship just as much as people do.

While I will not be releasing a formal public statement on the M.F.N. debate, you should feel free to share my sentiments with your colleagues. May God give you and all your colleagues His wisdom as you debate this important issue.

With every good wish,

BILLY GRAHAM.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

INSOLVENCY IN SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend a couple of minutes talking about some of the things that were not in the budget agreement that should have been in the budget agreement. One is the problem that we are facing on the insolvency of Social Security; and another is the situation developing with an increasing insolvency problem for our Medicare Program.

What we are doing in this country now is we are asking young working families to pay in additional taxes to pay for the benefits going to senior citizens in such areas as Medicare and Social Security. I am especially concerned with Social Security because according to statistics, more and more young people are depending on that Social Security for retirement benefits as they are saving less than past generations for their own retirement.

□ 1415

Let me briefly discuss the problem that we are running into on Social Security. Since it is a pay-as-you-go program, the taxes paid in by workers are taken by the Social Security Administration. Those Social Security taxes, those FICA taxes, are then paid out to existing retirees. So despite what many Americans think, that there is some kind of savings, there is not.

Since 1983 when we substantially increased the Social Security tax on working Americans, we have had a surplus coming into that fund. For every penny of surplus that has come in, we have seen the Federal Government—the U.S. Congress and the President spend every cent of that surplus coming in from Social Security taxes for other social spending that this Government has suggested it needs.

Here is the problem. When some of us brag that we are actually balancing the budget in the year 2002, the fact is that in that year, 2002, we are actually borrowing \$110 billion from the Social Security Trust Fund. So the budget is not truly in balance. Truly what we are doing is pretending that we are in balance because we are using money that is coming into the Social Security Trust Fund and spending it for other purposes.

Mr. Speaker, there are only two ways to deal with the insolvency of Social Security. We either in some fashion increase revenues or we decrease benefits.

I have introduced a Social Security bill in this last session. It is the only bill introduced in the House that deals with the problem of the insolvency of Social Security. That bill has been scored by the Social Security Administration to keep Social Security solvent for the next 75 years.

Somehow we have to get the message out to the American people, especially the younger people working, that they had better look at what their retirement benefits are. They had better look at the transfer of wealth from the working generation to the retired gen-

eration; and as we have more and more retirees in relation to the number of workers, the problem is compounding.

Here is what is happening. No. 1, people are living longer. Our medical technology has done a great job. When we started Social Security, the average age at death was 62-years-old. Today, guess what the average age at death is? The average age at death today is 75-years-old. Once you live to be 65 and start collecting Social Security, then, on the average, you are going to live to be 84. So you have, No. 1, people who are living longer, and then, No. 2, we had the biggest increase in the birth rate ever before in our history with the baby boomers, the children of the veterans of World War II.

Those baby boomers are now in their maximum earnings years. They are going to start retiring around 2008, and when they start retiring, of course, two things happen. Many more people will collect benefits and the maximum earnings of those people are not going to be taxed anymore for Social Security to pay out benefits.

So the experts are suggesting we are going to run short of money as early as 2005. Maybe it is going to be 2011 or 2012, but it could be as early as 2005. Then what do we do? How does this Federal Government, how does this Congress, Democrats and Republicans, start paying back what they have borrowed from the Social Security Trust Fund? How do we come up with the additional money necessary to pay existing benefits?

Look, politicians are going to have to take their heads out of the sand and start dealing with these tough, real problems that are facing us in the future. It is not politically popular, so many Members think they are going to be beat up back home, and I suggest that they may be right. But we have to take our heads out of the sand. Let us start dealing with these problems.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HORN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE ECONOMY: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. NEUMANN] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.